

# Glasgow's Historic Built Environment: A Snapshot

---

April 2018

## Glasgow City Heritage Trust

Conserving, enhancing and promoting  
Glasgow's historic built environment

---



Glasgow City Heritage Trust



## Introduction

This report has been produced by Glasgow City Heritage Trust (GCHT)\*. It contains facts, figures and perceptions collated between February and April 2018 which give a snapshot of the current state of Glasgow's historic built environment.

A huge amount of information already exists, collected at different scales and times and kept in different places by different people. This report brings some of that information together into one place, and drills down to give an idea of what's going on in Glasgow specifically.

We've put together this report in order to help inform the discussion at the State of Glasgow's Historic Built Environment Forum event on 25th April 2018 at Glasgow City Chambers. The report is not designed to be an exhaustive reference book, but rather a baseline of information to provoke discussion and perhaps illustrate some surprising facts.

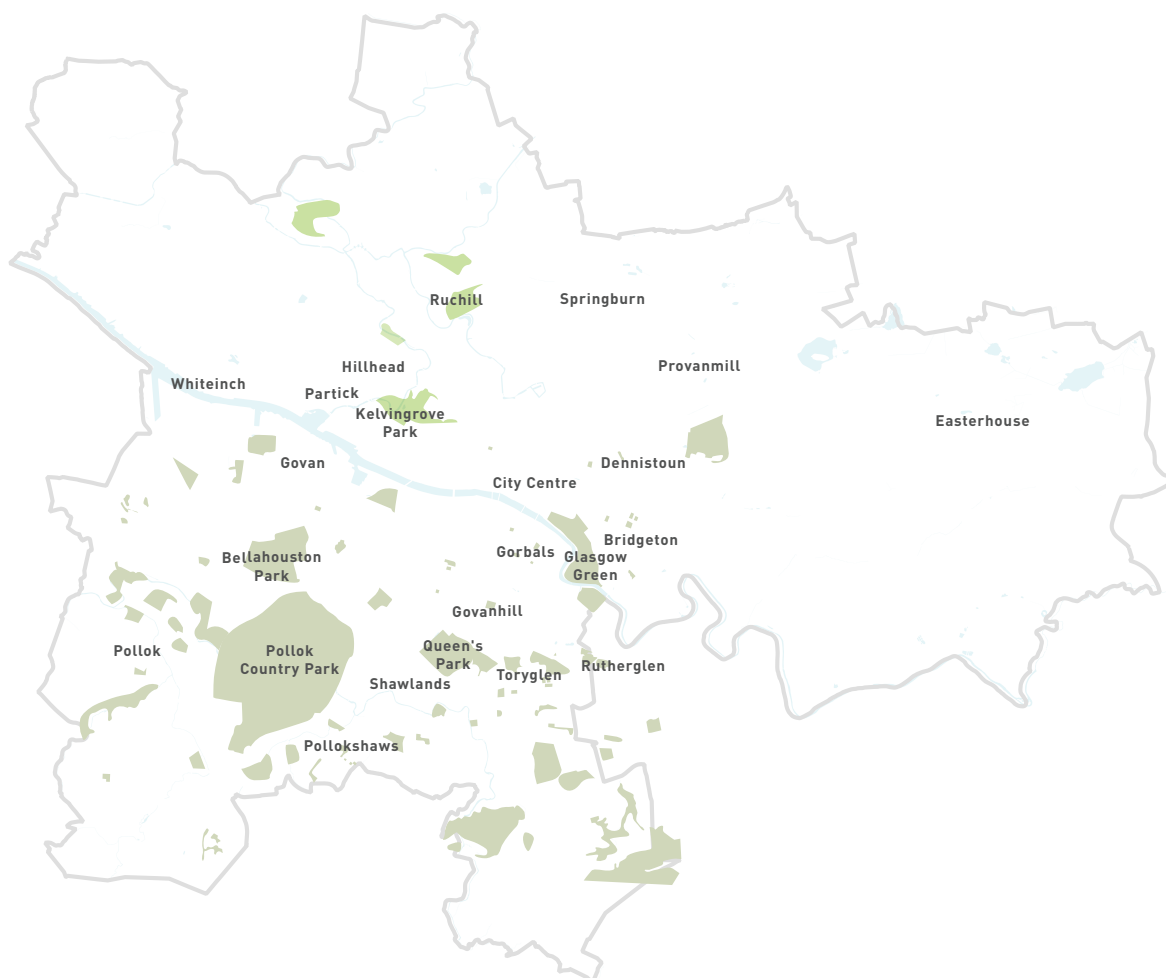
We've mined data from open sources, like the national census and household surveys, and we've interrogated this information to find out what the picture is like in Glasgow. We've spoken to stakeholders already active in Glasgow's historic built environment in order to discuss and share the information which exists, and talk about what else it might be good to know.

We have also collected perceptions and suggestions in online surveys from a general audience and from targeted groups too, including community councils. The results of these surveys are summarised in this report and provide an indication of how people view Glasgow's built heritage and what matters to them.

This report is intended to be an easy to read reference document which will be further supplemented with the output from participants at the Forum. GCHT is grateful for the contribution made to this report by the people of Glasgow, our funders, and the stakeholders who have contributed their time and resources.

\* Glasgow City Heritage Trust is an independent charity supported by Glasgow City Council and Historic Environment Scotland. Established in 2007, we have a clear mission whereby "through our conservation grants programmes people will enjoy, understand and care for Glasgow's historic built environment and will be able to access funding and expertise which will ensure the sustainability of the city's heritage for current and future generations"

## Contents and context



POPULATION

**p5**

PROTECTIONS

**p6**

AT RISK BUILDINGS

**p7**

HOUSING

**p11**

FUNDING

**p13**

ECONOMY & SKILLS

**p15**

PERCEPTIONS

**p16**

SOURCES

**p18**



Each person  
represents  
approximately 10,000  
people



Glasgow's population is a little over  
**600,000**

**Almost 1/2** live in areas which rank  
amongst the highest in terms of relative  
deprivation in Scotland. <sup>1</sup>



The current population of  
Glasgow's City Centre is  
**under 30,000.** <sup>2</sup>



**Is there a role for the historic  
built environment in reducing  
inequalities in the city?**



**Could vacant and at-risk  
city centre buildings play  
a role in repopulating the  
area?**



**Could students be  
engaged more in  
the city's historic  
environment?**



In 2016/17 there were  
around **70,000**  
students in the city <sup>3</sup>

**Just under a quarter** of Glasgow's  
population reported having a long-term health  
problem or disability which limits their day to day  
activities 'a little' or 'a lot' <sup>1</sup>



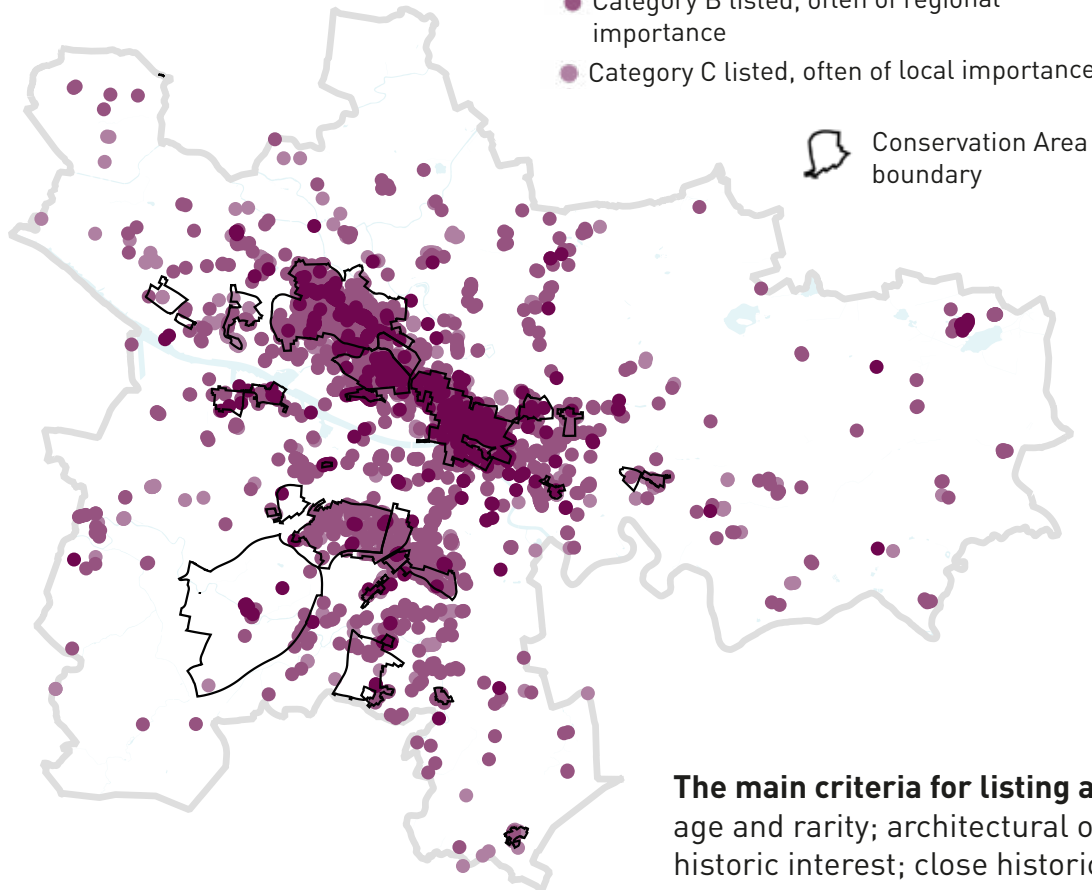
**How can we make sure that Glasgow's  
older buildings, spaces and places work  
for everyone, and don't exacerbate  
barriers which already exist?**



## PROTECTIONS

There are **over 1,800** listed buildings in Glasgow <sup>4</sup>

- Category A listed, often of national or international importance
- Category B listed, often of regional importance
- Category C listed, often of local importance

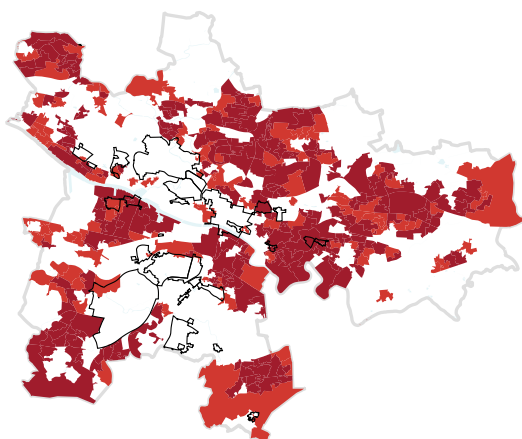


There are **25** conservation areas in Glasgow

**The main criteria for listing are:** age and rarity; architectural or historic interest; close historical association



**Do these designations fully reflect what the city and its people value about the historic built environment?**



**13%** of listed buildings are in areas amongst the highest ranked in terms of deprivation.

**30%** are in areas among the lowest ranked.

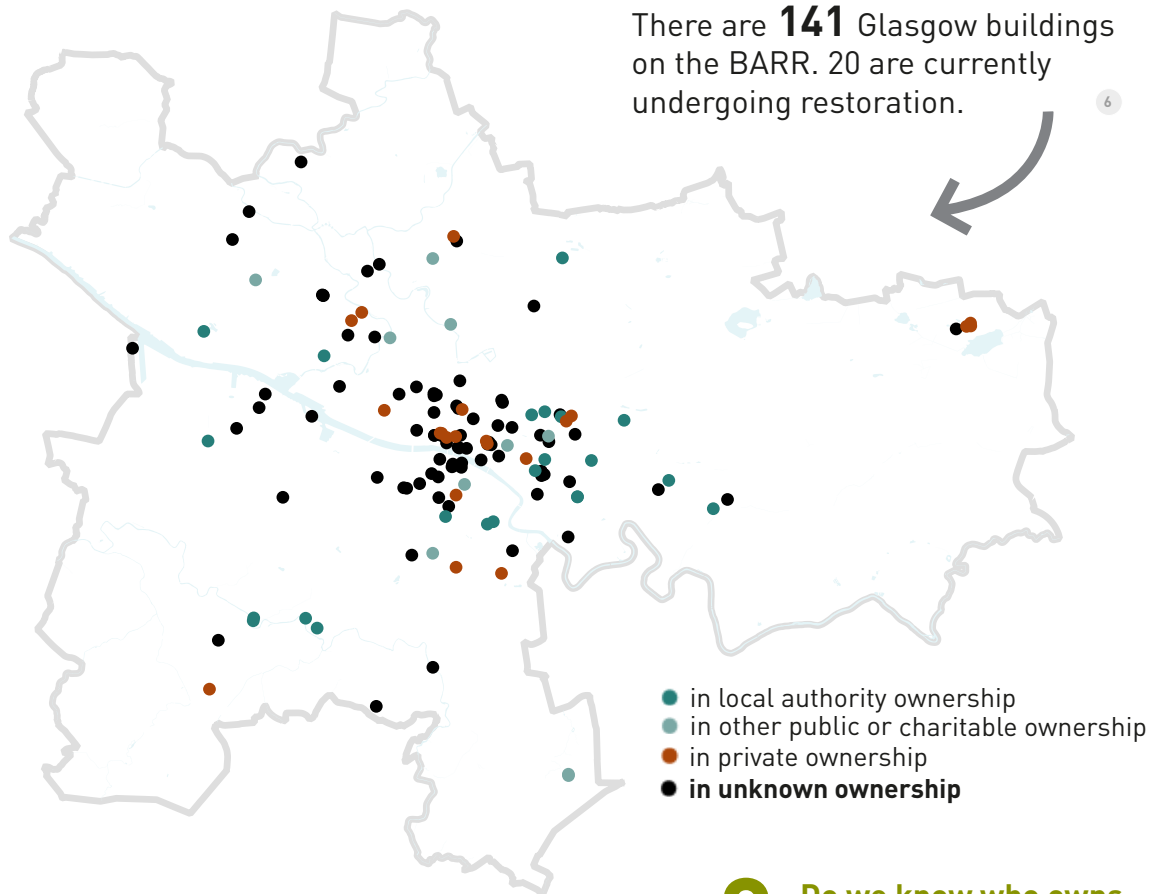
Govan & Ibrox, Bridgeton and Parkhead are the only Conservation Areas which overlap with the most deprived areas <sup>5</sup>



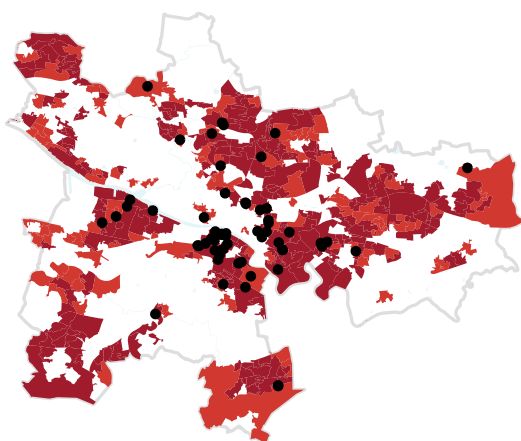
**Does this reflect elitism in conservation? Or is it a partly a consequence of the shape of the city's (re)development?**

The Buildings At Risk Register (BARR) has existed since 1990.

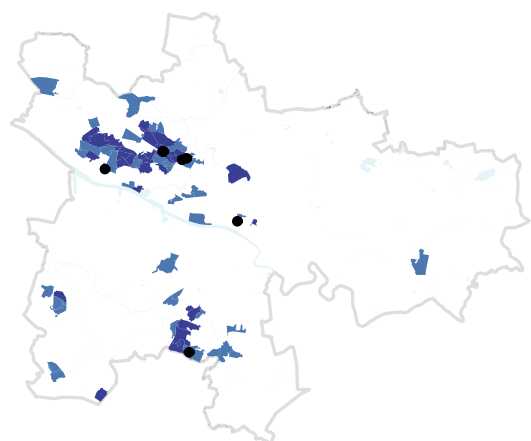
It highlights properties of 'architectural or historic merit' which are considered to be at risk or under threat.



**?** Do we know who owns our at-risk buildings?



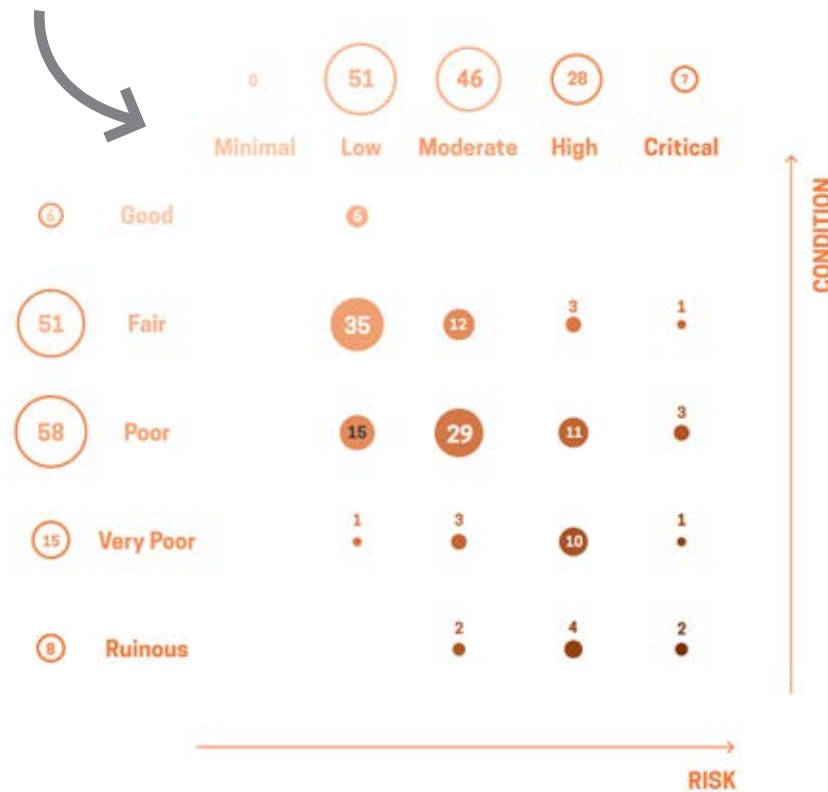
44% of buildings (53) currently 'at risk' are in areas which are amongst the highest ranked in terms of relative deprivation.



7% (8) currently 'at risk' are in areas which are amongst the lowest ranked in terms of relative deprivation.

Maps show census datazones in Glasgow which rank in 20% most deprived and 20% least deprived datazones nationally

## Risk vs condition <sup>6</sup>



?

What is preventing buildings in moderate-good condition at medium-low risk being brought back into use?

?

Can the condition of high-risk buildings be stabilised?

Since 1990, roughly **2.7** Glasgow buildings have been **saved for every 1 lost** to demolition. **170** in total have been recorded as saved. <sup>6</sup>

These 6 at-risk buildings are unlisted and outside of conservation areas.



Sir John Maxwell School (South)



St Clement's Church (East)



A Cochrane & Sons Office & Grocery Store (East)



A Cochrane & Sons Office & Grocery Warehouse (East)



Shakespeare Street School (North)



Shettleston Halls (East)

**48%** of all buildings on the register are within conservation areas. Which means **52%** aren't.

?

Should we be trying to save buildings which are unlisted and outside of conservation areas? Who might they be valuable to?

## Top 3 categories of at-risk buildings... <sup>6</sup>



**Commercial (35)**



**Residential (22)**



**Education (15)**



**What if...a 'stalled buildings' programme existed to help prevent newly vacant buildings falling into disrepair through temporary occupation?**



**Whose role is it, if anybody's, to actively search for new uses and occupants for vacant buildings?**

## Focus on...Board Schools

The Education (Scotland) Act 1872 made school compulsory for 5-13 year olds. Parish school boards were established to provide education, and a huge school building programme followed.

School boards existed from 1873 until they were abolished in 1919. In that time, the School Board of Glasgow and the Govan Parish School Board (2 of 7 of the Glasgow-area school boards created by the 1872 Act) built 107 schools.

The huge volume of work meant that there were many different architects. <sup>7</sup>

**141** school sites were transferred to the Education Authority of Glasgow in 1919.

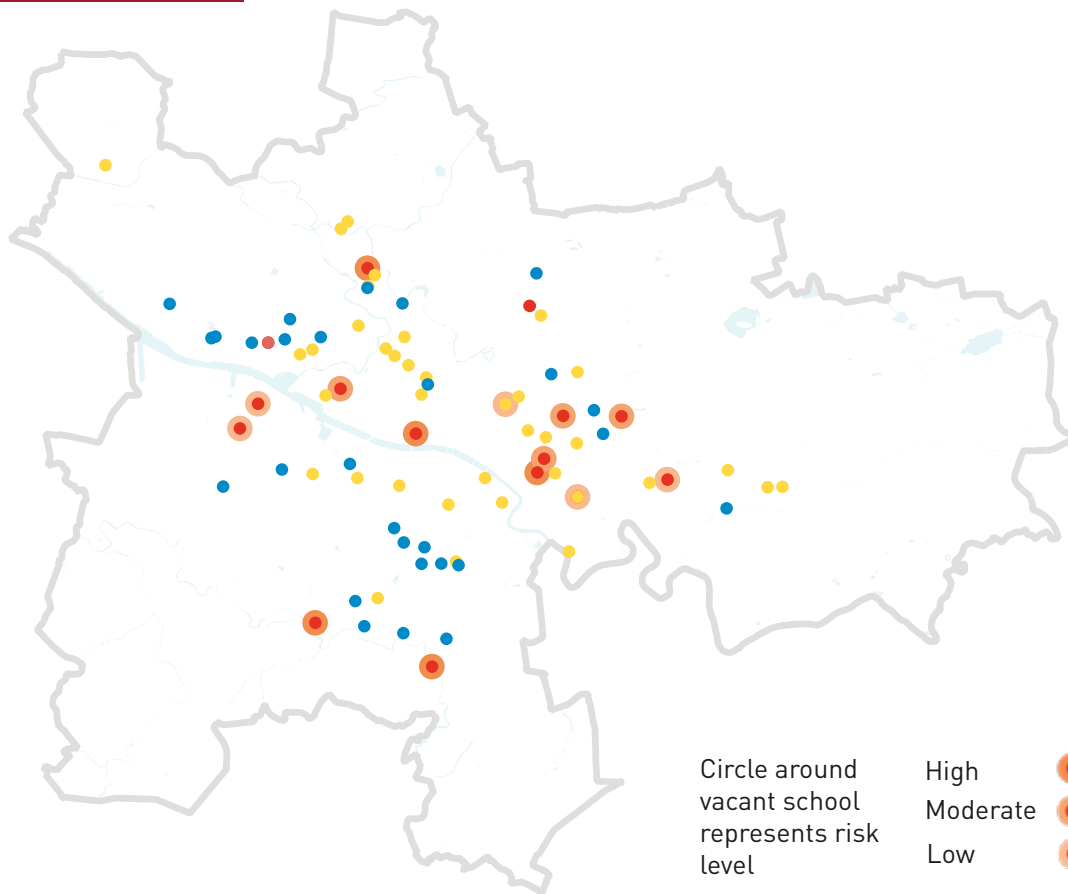
Between then and 2010, **60** have been demolished.

**13 out of the 15** schools currently known to be vacant are on the Buildings At Risk Register. <sup>6 7 8</sup>



**Public policy and organisations change, and we can end up with surplus buildings. How can public sector and other large organisational asset holders plan ahead for these surpluses?**

## AT RISK BUILDINGS



6 7 8



in use as school

in alternative use

vacant\*

?

Less than half of the remaining Board Schools are still schools, often because they're deemed no longer fit for purpose. Assuming this trend will continue, should we have a plan to avoid more falling into long term vacancy and disrepair, and what should it look like?

?



37 of the original Board Schools have a new use: what is stopping other vacant old board schools from being restored and repurposed?

What if...it was a requirement for the public sector to secure a new use for an old building before vacating or replacing it?



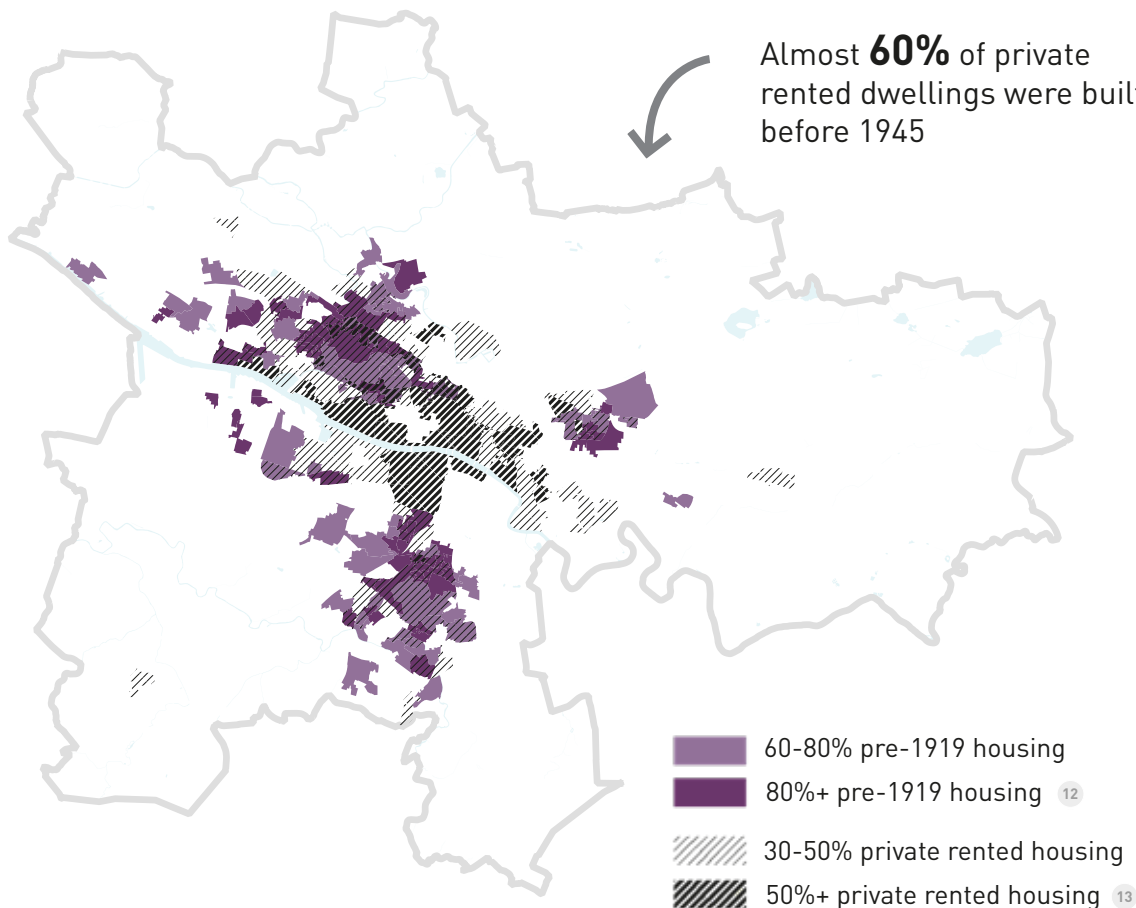
At current rates of building and demolition, up to 75% of the housing stock which will exist in 2050 already exists now <sup>9</sup>

Around **44%** of all dwellings in Glasgow were built before 1945 (that's 126,000 households)

→ **Over 80%** of pre-1945 dwellings are flats <sup>10</sup>

Between 2001 and 2011 the proportion of housing stock which is rented privately **more than doubled.** <sup>11</sup>

Almost **60%** of private rented dwellings were built before 1945



**84%** of pre-1945 dwellings have some kind of disrepair.

**64%** have disrepair to **critical elements** (compared to 39% of post-1945 stock). <sup>10</sup>

?

**Older, privately-rented tenement flats house a lot of the city's people, increasingly so. How do we make sure they are maintained and meet modern living standards?**

**? We are increasingly tenants rather than homeowners. In that context, is grant and funding criteria for repair work still fit for purpose?**

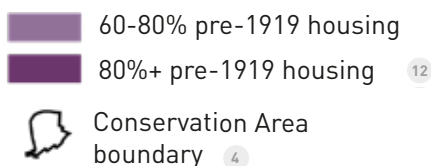
**A 2006 survey found...** <sup>14</sup>



**...nearly 2/3** of privately owned and rented pre-1919 dwellings still had single glazing. Energy efficiency is low and fuel poverty was a significant issue.

and **...almost 17 out of 20** older private houses would fail the Scottish Housing Quality Standard

**? This data is more than a decade old. Has the situation improved?**

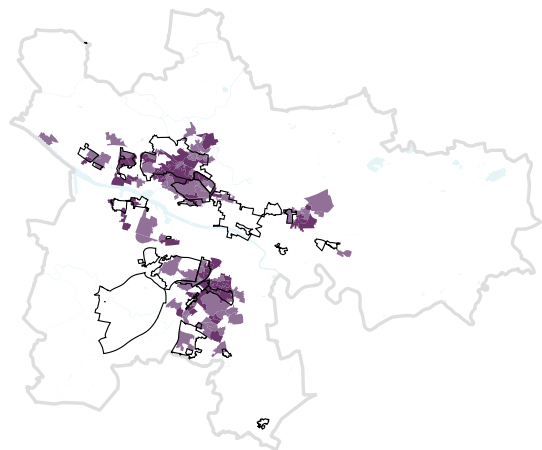


Lots, but not all concentrations of pre-1919 housing fall within conservation areas

Homeowners (including non-resident landlords) are often 'property rich but income poor' <sup>11</sup>

**? How can homeowners be supported to improve the thermal efficiency of older properties?**

**? How can landlords be supported to improve the thermal efficiency of their properties for tenants?**



**On one street in Pollokshields...**



**? What's the dominant character of the area here now? Should the next homeowner be allowed to install uPVC windows?**

**? What conflicts might exist between the need to improve the energy efficiency of older dwellings and the desire to maintain the special character of conservation areas?**



**What if...small firms making and installing replacement wooden sash windows were able to offer repayable finance to their customers?**

There's a perception that it is cheaper to knock a building down and build a new one than to repair and repurpose an old one



**Is adequate, clear information being made available to developers?**

A '**conservation deficit**' exists where the existing value of an asset plus the cost of bringing it back into use is greater than the **value of the asset** after development.

A lack of commercial viability can prevent historic assets from being returned to a beneficial and commercial use.



**How do we measure the value of a restored historic asset? Is there social, cultural and environmental value which is difficult to capture in terms of money?**



**Are eligibility criteria for grant funding fit for purpose? Do they allow funding to be accessed where it's most needed?**

Grant funding usually requires benefit to be demonstrated. Some benefits are more tangible or measurable than others.



**Can pursuing more tangible or measurable benefits (eg. training) help access funding which will enable other, less tangible benefits (eg. a coherent sense of place)?**



**Grant funding such as HLF's Heritage Enterprise grants can help cover the funding gap. Are there other innovative ways to bridge the conservation deficit?**



**What if...there was a central hub of information which signposted people to appropriate funding sources?**



**What if...there was a 'heritage levy' on new development in conservation areas to help streetscape improvement and building maintenance?**



15



So far in Scotland there have been **5 completed community share offers** involving built heritage, and 5 more are ongoing <sup>16</sup>



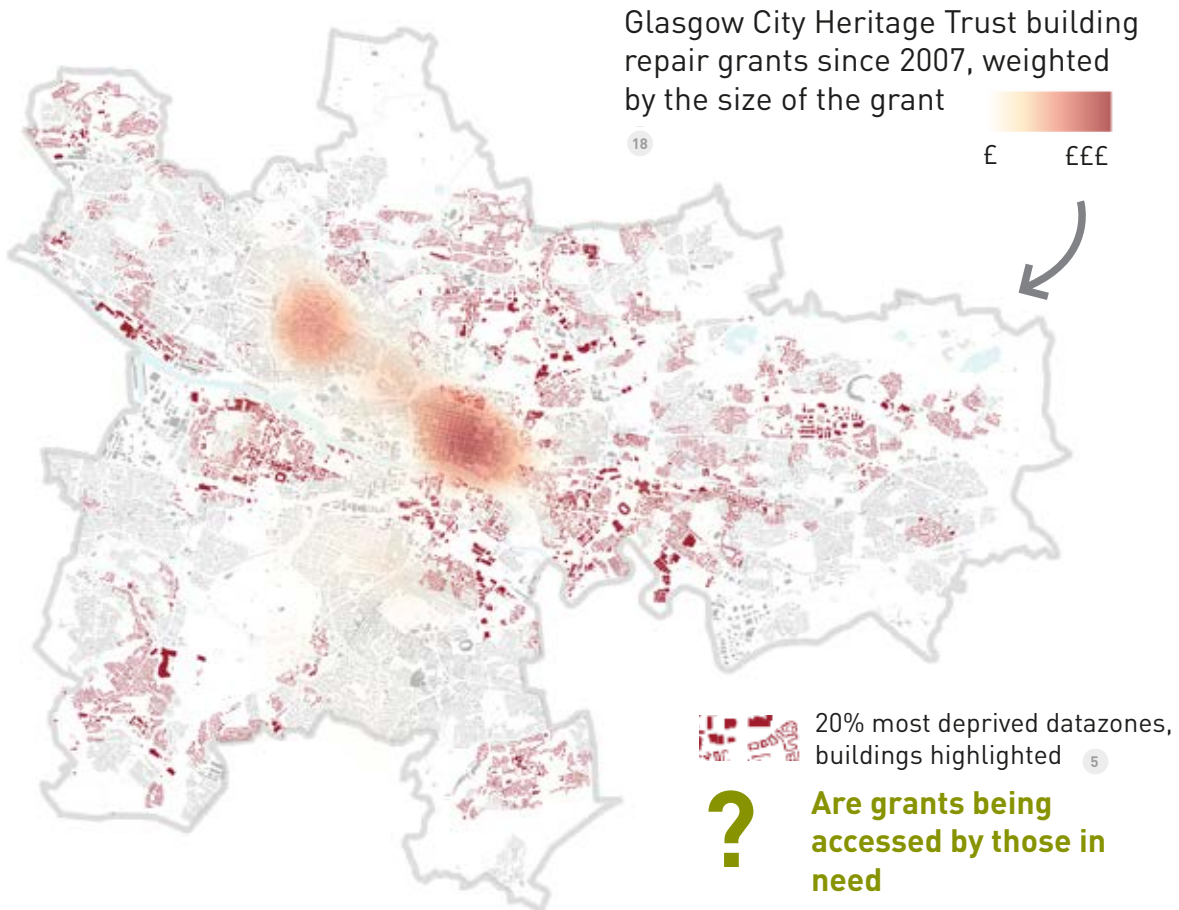
## FUNDING

Merchant City Townscape Heritage Initiative: for every **£1** of grant spend, **£10** of investment in physical regeneration was leveraged

17

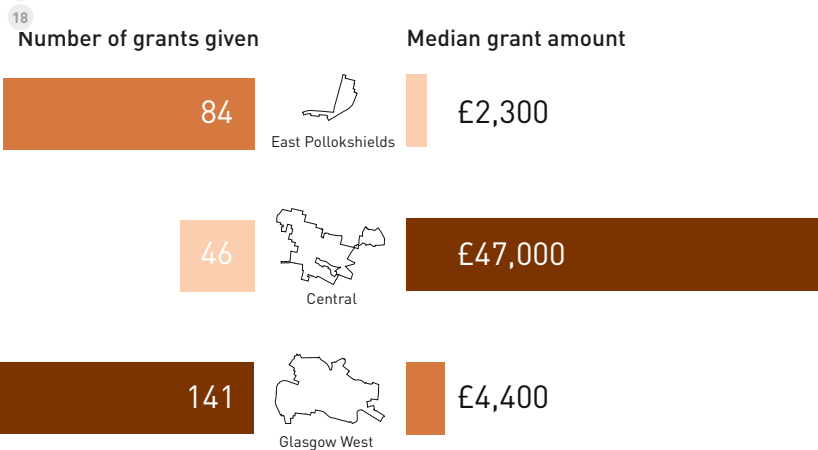
Townscape Heritage Initiatives (THIs) are intended to help communities in areas where there is a concentration of historic buildings, spaces and places, and a social and economic need for investment.

There are live THIs at the moment in Govan and Parkhead.



**?**

Is investing in the historic environment at scale more beneficial than investing in lots of little isolated projects?





There are over **700** social enterprises operating in Glasgow, with a combined net worth of **£1.6bn** <sup>19</sup>

**20%** of Glasgow social enterprises report that they might benefit from help with property solutions <sup>19</sup>



**What are the space needs of small enterprises in Glasgow?**

**19%** of small businesses in Scotland report that the availability or cost of premises is a major obstacle to success. <sup>20</sup>



**Do older buildings in Glasgow match any of these space and affordability needs?**

## Focus on...traditional skills



The total number of stone facades in Glasgow is **over 24,000**. <sup>21</sup>

In 2006, **almost 97%** were in need of repair

The skills needed to maintain older buildings are different from those needed in modern construction.

There is an established need for skills to repair and maintain older buildings, including stonemasonry and roofing.

Most work on traditional buildings is carried out by general construction firms, where traditional skills have been in decline. <sup>22</sup>

**95%** of surveyed construction firms hold no formal qualifications relating to work on traditional buildings.

**Over 70%** haven't undergone any training relating to work on traditional buildings in the last 4-5 years.

The construction workforce is aging: around a third are currently 50+



**What if...a publicly owned building at risk became a live project for traditional skills trainees?**



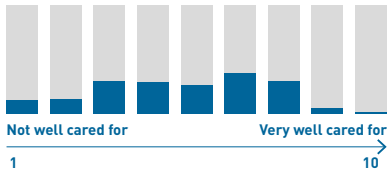
**13%** of the workforce working 'exclusively' on traditional buildings are women, compared to **just 1%** in manual trades in construction.



**Could a focus on traditional skills be a way to encourage more women into the construction industry?**

## PERCEPTIONS

We asked people their thoughts on whether Glasgow's older buildings, spaces and places are well cared for, what's good, what's not so good, and suggestions for change <sup>23</sup>



184 people answered

The average score given was **4.7 out of 10**

We sorted the responses into recurring themes. Charts show number of responses in each.



### "What's good?"



High profile buildings, including public and city centre buildings



Individual [isolated] restoration and renovation projects



Respondents couldn't think of anything positive

**Other responses:** Preservation & care (16) General restoration & reuse (16) Promotion of built heritage (12) Specific areas (12) Parks & museums (10) Civic groups, volunteers and community (7) Planning & designation (6) Changing attitudes (6) Tourism (6)



### "What should we do?"



Preservation and care of what remains



Restoration and (re-use), tackling vacancy



Tackle negligent owners and 'land banking'

**Other responses:** Public realm & the bigger picture (23) Better grants and funding (11) Better enforcement of protections (10) Expand focus beyond high profile (9) Involve communities (8) Educate and inspire (7) Make a plan (7)



### "What's not good?"



Neglect by owners - "left to rot"



Lack of maintenance and visible poor condition



Insensitive and bland new build, including student halls



Unnecessary or excessive demolition



Should a carrot or stick approach be taken to tackling negligent owners?



What if owners had to rebuild like for like after a fire, instead of being able to rebuild completely new?



Is demolition an acceptable or desirable alternative to repair and maintenance?

We asked community councils their thoughts on whether Glasgow's older buildings, spaces and places are well cared for, whether they contribute to the identity of their area, and how much they feel able to influence change <sup>23</sup>

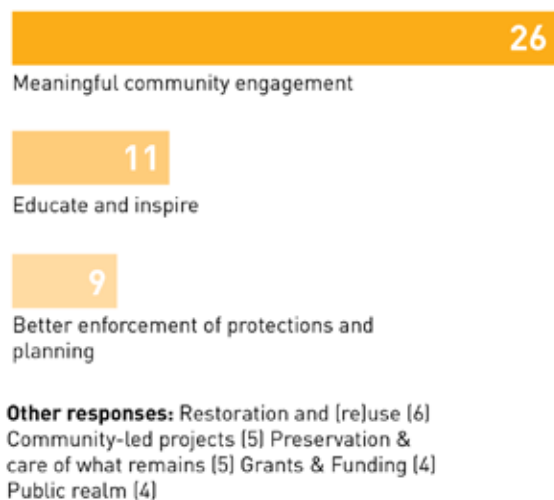
44 people answered from 22 different community council areas



### "What's good?"



### "What should we do?"



### "What's not good?"



"There needs to be a **change in attitude** towards the past...there needs to be recognition in planning practice that historic buildings and areas form **key elements in regeneration** of the city"

"Scottish **Tenement Law is still defective** / weak which impedes the proper progress of common repairs"

"The decision should be taken by people who care about the historic built environment. As in the way the Clyde made Glasgow and Glasgow made the Clyde. **Historic buildings made Glasgow and Glasgow made historic buildings**"

"Older buildings must be preserved to give us an identity for our past. However, we should not preserve something just because it is old, **we should preserve it because it has a function and role to play in the city**. Only then will these buildings be maintained and continue to be an asset for Glasgow"

- 1 Understanding Glasgow: The Glasgow Indicators Project [www.understandingglasgow.com](http://www.understandingglasgow.com)
- 2 Glasgow City Centre Strategy 2014-2019 (Glasgow City Council)
- 3 Students at University of Glasgow, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow Caledonian University and Glasgow School of Art (Higher Education Statistics Agency)
- 4 Listed Buildings and Conservation areas (Historic Environment Scotland)
- 5 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (Scottish Government)
- 6 Buildings At Risk Register. The Register is maintained by Historic Environment Scotland.
- 7 The Architecture and Impact of Board Schools in Glasgow (Sarah Hamilton, University of Edinburgh, 2010)
- 8 Glasgow City Council records (thanks to Shona Simpson, Built Heritage Officer)
- 9 State of the stock: What do we know about existing buildings and their future prospects? (Energy Policy, 2008)
- 10 Scottish House Condition Survey 2014-16 (Scottish Government)
- 11 Our Crumbling Tenements (Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations)
- 12 Data on housing stock age and energy efficiency. Home Reports in Scotland (Energy Savings Trust). This data just gives an idea of the true state - the presence of a home report relies on a house being sold.
- 13 2011 Scottish Census
- 14 Condition Survey of Older Private Houses (2006), and Older Private Housing Strategy (2009) (Glasgow City Council)
- 15 Ideas from various sources including Good Finance.
- 16 Community Share Offers (Community Shares Scotland)
- 17 Merchant City Case Study, in the Townscape Heritage Initiative 10 Year Review (Heritage Lottery Fund)
- 18 Building Repair Grants handed out by Glasgow City Heritage Trust between 2007 and 2016-17.
- 19 Social Enterprise in Glasgow, 2017 (Glasgow Social Enterprise Network)
- 20 Scotland Small Business Survey, 2015 (Scottish Government)
- 21 Safeguarding Glasgow's Stone Built Heritage: Skills and Materials Requirements, 2006 (British Geological Survey)
- 22 Skills Needs Analysis 2013 (Historic Scotland, English Heritage and CITB)
- 23 GCHT Surveys, conducted March and April 2018

## Thanks

Glasgow City Heritage Trust is an independent charity, supported by Historic Environment Scotland and Glasgow City Council. We are very grateful to our principal funders whose support is crucial to ensure that our charitable work promoting the understanding, appreciation and conservation of Glasgow's historic buildings for the benefit of the city's communities and its visitors continues now and in the future.

Glasgow City Heritage Trust is an enabling organisation: we facilitate the conservation and celebration of Glasgow's historic environment through funding and partnership working. We can only achieve our aims in collaboration with others. We are, therefore, very grateful for the help and support that we have been given in the production of this report and the forum itself.

Special thanks are given to the following who have given both their time, datasets, opinions and expert knowledge:

Annie Flint (Under One Roof), Anne Laird (Friends of Glasgow West), Isabel Fry (HES-BARR), Shona Simpson (GCC), Anne McChlery (GBPT), Jennifer Russell (Glasgow University Estates), Linda Shetabi (PhD student Glasgow Uni) and Cllr Kenny McLean.

And to everyone else who took the time to respond to our surveys and answer our questions.

We would also like to thank the Lord Provost for the use of Glasgow City Chambers for the forum event.



---

Report Content & Design by Poppea Daniel, Consultant

**Glasgow City Heritage Trust**, 54 Bell Street, Glasgow G1 1LQ

**T:** 0141 552 1331 **E:** [events@glasgowheritage.org.uk](mailto:events@glasgowheritage.org.uk)

**[www.glasgowheritage.org.uk](http://www.glasgowheritage.org.uk)**

Glasgow City Heritage Trust is supported by Glasgow City Council and Historic Environment Scotland  
Company number: SC318618 Scottish Charity Number: SC038640